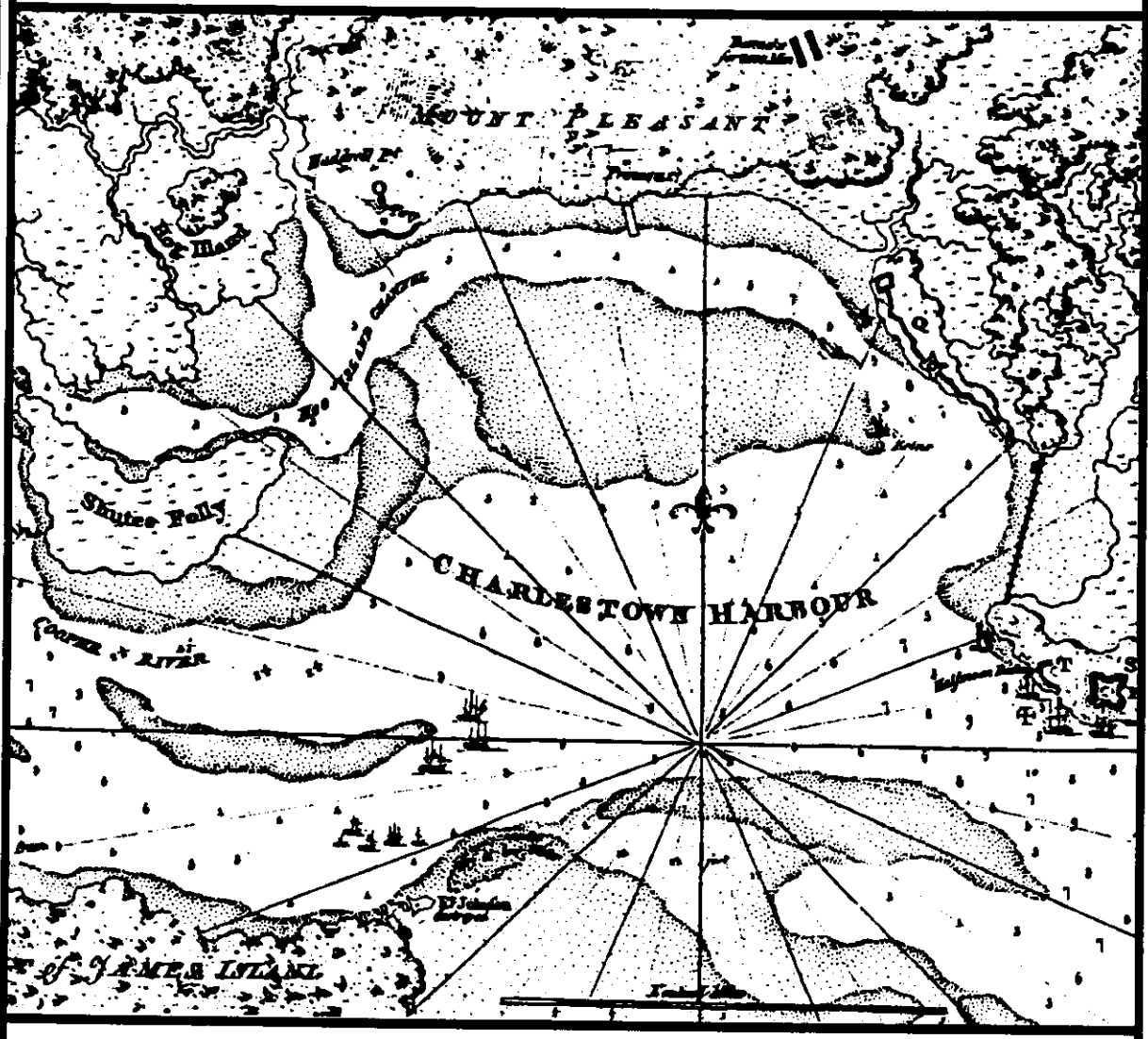
Cultural Resources Management Plan
Town of Mt. Pleasant
South Carolina



Brockington and Associates, Inc.
Atlanta Charleston
1999

Cultural Resources Management Plan
Town of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

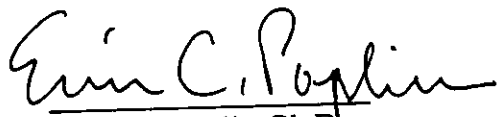
Prepared for:

Town of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

Prepared by:

Bruce G. Harvey, Ph.D.
Architectural Historian

and



Eric C. Poplin, Ph.D.
Archaeologist and Principal Investigator

Brockington and Associates, Inc.
Atlanta Charleston

January 1999

Table of Contents

List of Figures

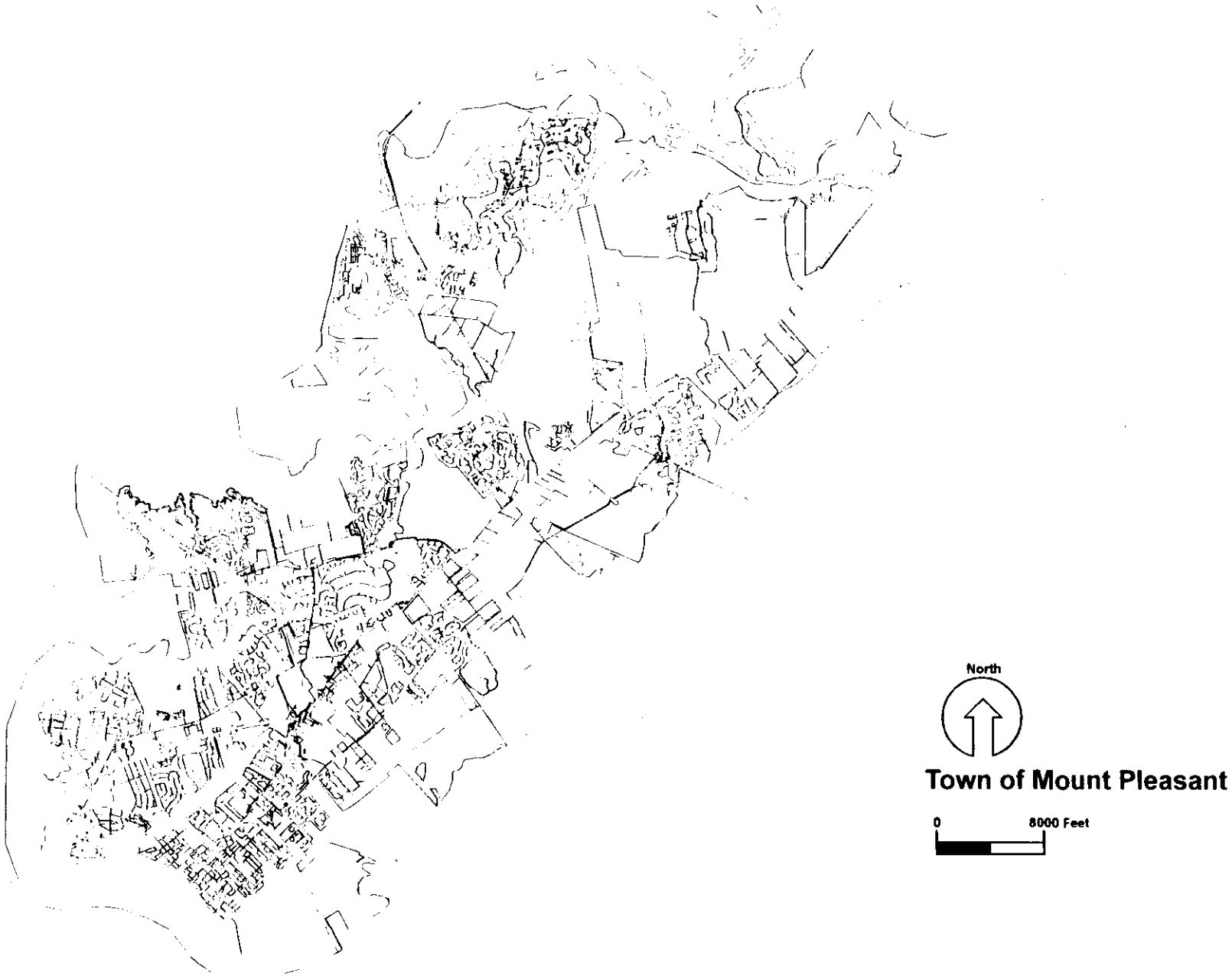
List of Tables

Chapter I. Introduction

This Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) is designed to assist officials with the Town of Mt. Pleasant in planning for the management and protection of the cultural resources within the Town. The CRMP provides a general overview of cultural resources in Mt. Pleasant, both known sites and areas which are likely to contain cultural resources. The objective for this CRMP is to provide sufficient information to Town of Mt. Pleasant officials to allow them to ensure that cultural resources within the Town will be protected by including them in the day-to-day development and expansion planning process.

The Town of Mt. Pleasant has experienced dramatic and rapid growth in the past several decades. Population has risen sharply as more and more people have found the Town to be a desirable place to live. As a result, the geographical boundaries of the Town have expanded as well, and the Town now encompasses approximately 42 square miles. Figure 1 shows the current boundaries of the Town of Mt. Pleasant. With new areas forming the Town, and large numbers of new people moving here, the pressures on undeveloped land and on previously developed historic areas has become great. Mt. Pleasant and the Wando Neck area has been primarily a rural, agricultural area, one dominated by plantations and open spaces, for much of the past three centuries. Many of the cultural resources, therefore, lie in the open areas of the Town, along the many waterways and the few roads, as well as in the historic village core of Mt. Pleasant and its surrounding neighborhoods. As a result, the pressures on cultural resources, many of which exist within the undeveloped lands or are parts of the previously developed historic areas, is correspondingly great.

This document is intended to provide Town officials with a basis for making decisions regarding cultural resources when presented with petitions for development. There are currently three regulatory processes which affect cultural resources in the Town. The South Carolina Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) administers the ***Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 [16 USC 141 seq.] as amended***, ***the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1976 [Chapter 39, Title 48, SC Code] as amended***, and ***15 CFR 930: Federal Consistency with Approved Coastal Management Programs***. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Charleston District administers the Federal Clean Water Act. These state and federal regulatory agencies provide automatic cultural resources protection for many of the commercial developments in the Town of Mt. Pleasant, as they do throughout the Lowcountry.



the Town of Mount Pleasant showing the current boundaries.

Many of the proposed developments in Mt. Pleasant, however, fall outside of these Federal and State regulations. In addition, these regulations are concerned with the specific property in question, not the welfare and direction of the Town in general. The Town of Mt. Pleasant's permitting process provides opportunities for additional developments which may fall outside the regulations administered by OCRM and USACE. According to the cultural and natural resource elements of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (1998), this permitting process allows the Town some oversight on the impact of development activities on cultural resources. This is an encouraging recommendation, and this CRMP is designed to provide Town officials with the background information for implementing it.

Cultural resources include buildings, structures, objects, districts, sites, archaeological sites, landmarks, and historic cemeteries. The Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service has defined these categories. While many of these categories are self-explanatory, some will benefit from definitions and distinctions. Buildings are those objects created principally to shelter any form of human activity. This category can include houses, barns, churches, public offices, hotels, or similar constructions. Structures are distinguished from buildings as functional constructions designed to provide services other than human shelter. Structures can include bridges, highways, tunnels, dams, boats and ships, silos, windmills, and similar constructions. Objects are principally artistic in nature and small in scale, often moveable. These can include boundary markers, fountains, and statuary. Sites are often the locations of significant events or historic or prehistoric occupations where the location itself possesses cultural significance apart from whatever constructions may remain on the site. Sites often, though not always, have archaeological components. Archaeological sites are therefore a distinct category. Districts are a significant concentration or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are united historically by either plan or development. The contributing elements of a district usually are physically contiguous, though not exclusively.

Both architectural (above-ground) and archaeological (below ground) resources have been found in developed and urban areas, and in undeveloped rural areas. Dozens of cultural resource studies have been conducted throughout the Town of Mt. Pleasant, much of it driven by the need to comply with the various regulations listed above. These studies have contributed a great deal to the understanding of Mt. Pleasant's prehistory and history, and can help planners be aware of the cultural resources in the Town. Most of these studies are in the form of "gray literature," reports that have not been published and are often available on a very limited basis, often only from the agency or firm that produced the report. An annotated bibliography of these studies, including the agencies or firms that produced them, can be found in the appendix of this CRMP.

This CRMP was not a field survey, nor was it a project relying on original research. The field work consisted of the architectural historian and the archaeologist driving all of the public roads within the Town and noting areas which have the potential to contain cultural resources. This included both undeveloped areas which have the potential to contain archaeological remains and parts of the Town which were developed in the 1940s and 1950s and which will be eligible to be considered as historic architectural and landscape design resources in the near future. Like the field work, the background research was principally synthetic, drawing upon existing reports and publications for the basic themes and events in Mt. Pleasant's prehistory and history. Additional background research conducted for this CRMP consisted primarily of locating historic maps and plats that helped to identify areas that may contain cultural resources. Chapter II consists of an overview of Mt. Pleasant's history and prehistory, and provides the themes that guide the interpretation of cultural resources in the Town. The results of the reconnaissance field work and the overview of the available maps and plats has been summarized in Chapter III.

In 1998, the Town of Mt. Pleasant completed its Comprehensive Plan (Mt. Pleasant Town Council 1998). There were no specific guidelines for treatment of cultural resources, but the Plan included both cultural and natural resource elements with recommended needs and goals, and strategies which will lead to their implementation. In Chapter IV, the results of the field reconnaissance and the review of historic maps and plats discussed in Chapter III are integrated with the Implementation Strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Chapter IV includes a series of recommendations regarding the management of the known and potential cultural resources in the Town of Mt. Pleasant in light of the goals and Implementation Strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter II. Natural and Cultural Setting

Natural Setting

The Town of Mt. Pleasant is situated in what is known as the Wando Neck. This is a wedge of land bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Charleston Harbor, and the Wando River, and extending as far inland to the northeast as Awendaw Creek. The Town of Mt. Pleasant occupies most of the Wando Neck, excepting only the sea islands of Sullivan's Island, the Isle of Palms, and Dewees Island. The Town has witnessed rapid and extensive growth in recent decades, and there are large developed, or developing, areas throughout the Town.

Generally, topography in the region consists of low ridges between the meandering channels of the many streams that drain the Lower Coastal Plain. The ridges consist of sandy and loamy soils with more clayey soils and sediments occurring in the drainages, marshes, and swamps that border the streams. Elevations on Wando Neck range from 1.5-7.6 ft above mean sea level (amsl).

The sandy to clay uplands of the Wando Neck represent Late Pleistocene and early Holocene coastal deposits; that is, they are remnants of barrier islands along the former shoreline similar to the modern barrier islands (e.g., Isle of Palms, Sullivan's Island) that lie to the east. The relict beach ridges and islands are defined as distinct "terraces" of the Coastal Plain (Kovacik and Winberry 1987). The Pamlico Terrace, containing the Wando Neck, represents the latest of these relict shorelines (Miller 1971). Apparently, it is associated with the last two stable high stands of the ocean during the Pleistocene Epoch, dating approximately 10,000 and 30,000 years ago (Hoyt and Hails 1967; Hoyt et al. 1968).

Similar processes have been examined in more detail for the more recent deposits that constitute the modern Sea Island provinces of South Carolina. As with earlier changes in sea level, the most recent fluctuations were related to the advance and retreat of the ice formations and glaciers of the Northern Hemisphere (Colquhoun 1969). Colquhoun and Brooks (1986) and Brooks et al. (1989) have documented the minor fluctuations that have occurred since the end of the last glacial period (ca. 10,000-12,000 BP). These fluctuations greatly influenced the prehistoric utilization of the region, and to a lesser extent, its historic utilization.

The climate of this area is subtropical, with mild winters and long, hot, and humid summers. The average daily maximum temperature reaches a peak of 80.1° F in July, although average highs are in the 80° range from May through September. A mean high of 46.8° F characterizes the coldest winter month, January. Average annual precipitation for Charleston County is about 1.2 m, with most rain occurring in the summer months during thunderstorms; snowfall is very rare. The growing season averages 280 days, with first and last frosts generally occurring by November 2 and April 3, respectively. Although droughts do occur, they are rare. Also, the climate is very supportive of agriculture. Prevailing winds are light and generally from the south and southwest, although hurricanes and other tropical storms occasionally sweep through the area, particularly in the fall months.

Cultural Setting

Prehistoric Overview

The prehistory of coastal South Carolina has received much attention from archaeologists. The present interpretations of that prehistory are presented briefly in this section. The following summary discussion is divided into periods that represent distinct cultural adaptations in the region; these periods are summarized in Table 1. Environmental changes that occurred in each period are also described.

Paleoindian Period (10000-8000 BC). Human presence in the South Carolina Coastal Plain apparently began about 12,000 years ago with the movement into the region of hunter-gatherers. Goodyear et al. (1989) have reviewed the evidence for the Paleoindian occupation of South Carolina. Based on the distribution of distinctive fluted spear points diagnostic to the period, they see the major sources of highly workable lithic raw materials as the principal determinant of Paleoindian site location, with a concentration of sites at the Fall Line possibly indicating a subsistence strategy of seasonal relocation between the Piedmont and Coastal Plain. Based on data from a number of sites excavated over most of North America, Paleoindian groups were generally nomadic, with subsistence focusing on the hunting of large mammals, specifically the now-extinct mammoth, horse, camel, and giant bison. Groups were probably small, i.e., kin-based bands of 50 or fewer persons. As the environment changed at the end of the Wisconsin glaciation, Paleoindian groups had to adapt to new forest conditions in the Southeast and throughout North America.

Table 1. Cultural Sequence for the Charleston Region.

Beginning Date	Period	Comments
AD 1670	Historic	Early settlement followed by dominance of slave-based plantation agriculture; Native Americans present until early eighteenth century.
AD 1521	Protohistoric	Continuation of Mississippian lifeways with increasing dependence on European trade; population decline due to introduced diseases, European slave raids, and internecine warfare.
AD 1000	Mississippian	Corn agriculture; increased populations; stratified society; complicated stamped ceramics; small triangular arrow points.
1500 BC	Woodland	Continued hunting and gathering, perhaps supplemented by incipient agriculture; sedentary villages; ceramics, stamped and fabric/cord impressed; large stemmed point early in the period replaced by small triangular arrow points later.
8000 BC	Archaic	Hunting and gathering (Primary Forest Efficiency) with scheduled, seasonal rounds; some sedentism noted at the end of the period in larger shell mound sites of the coast and major rivers; small and large notched points; fiber tempered ceramics late in the period.
10000 BC	Paleoindian	Nomadic hunting (free based wandering) of the now extinct megafauna. Distinctive fluted spear points.

Archaic Period (8000-1500 BC). The Archaic period is a long period of readaptation to modern forest conditions in eastern North America. Caldwell (1958) has characterized the period as movement toward Primary Forest Efficiency, by which he means that during this period human groups continually developed new and more effective subsistence strategies for exploiting the wild resources of the modern oak-hickory forest. Coe (1964), based on extensive work in the North Carolina Piedmont, has subdivided the Archaic period into a number of sequential sub-periods recognizable by distinctive stone point/knife forms. Coe's (1964) sequence has been confirmed over large parts of the Southeast, and is applicable to most of South Carolina.

Archaic groups probably moved seasonally within a regular territory; exploitation of wild plant and animal resources was well planned and scheduled. Anderson and Hanson (1988) have developed a settlement model for the Early Archaic (8000-6000 BC) in South Carolina involving seasonal movement of relatively small groups (bands) within major river drainages. The Charleston region is located within the range of the Saluda/Broad band. Anderson and Hanson (1988) hypothesize that Early Archaic use of the Lower Coastal Plain was limited to seasonal (spring time) foraging camps and logistical camps; aggregation camps and winter base camps are hypothesized to have been near the Fall Line. They also hypothesize that as population increased in the Middle Archaic (6000-2500 BC), band mobility decreased and territoriality increased. Blanton and

Sassaman (1989) have recently reviewed the archaeological literature on the Middle Archaic sub-period. They document an increased simplification of lithic technology through this period, with increased use of expedient, situational tools. Furthermore, they argue that the use of local lithic raw materials is characteristic of the Middle and Late Archaic. Blanton and Sassaman (1989:68) conclude that "the data at hand suggest that Middle Archaic populations resorted to a pattern of adaptive flexibility" as a response to "mid-Holocene environmental conditions" such as "variable precipitation, sea level rise, and differential vegetational succession." These processes resulted in changes in the types of resources available from year to year.

Generally, there is evidence for extensive trade networks covering large areas of North America and for the establishment of sedentary villages during the Late Archaic sub-period (2500-1500 BC). Some of the best evidence of sedentary villages occurs along the South Carolina coast in the form of large middens of oyster shell and other food remains. These refuse heaps probably indicate substantial, relatively long term habitations. Also, the first evidence of the manufacture and use of ceramics dates from the Late Archaic sub-period.

Woodland Period (1500 BC-AD 1000). During the succeeding Woodland period, sedentism apparently increased, although scheduled exploitation of wild food resources in a seasonal round continued. The Woodland period is noteworthy for several technological and social developments: (1) the widespread manufacture and use of ceramics for cooking and storage, (2) the beginnings of agriculture, and (3) construction of burial mounds and other earthworks. While evidence of burial mounds and agriculture is not extensive at the few South Carolina Woodland period sites investigated in detail (Brooks and Canouts 1984; Trinkley 1980, 1990), ceramics are widespread, being found at many small sites throughout the state. The varied manufacturing procedures and decorative styles of these ceramics allow differentiation of site collections into several sub-periods as well as inferences of group movement and influence from adjacent geographic areas. Trinkley (1980) and Anderson et al. (1982) have developed classificatory schemes for Woodland period groups based on ceramics from a number of sites. Following Anderson et al. (1982), Poplin et al. (1993) developed a classificatory scheme for the ceramic producing prehistoric periods in the Charleston region.

Mississippian Period (AD 1000-1521). The final period of prehistory in South Carolina, the Mississippian period, begins about AD 1000 and ends with the arrival and colonization of the area by Europeans in the 1500s and 1600s. During the Mississippian period, agriculture became well established, and sedentary villages and towns became the dominant habitation type (although

relatively isolated farmsteads were also apparently common - see Brooks and Canouts 1984). Ferguson (1971) proposed a model of Mississippian settlement involving major political centers dominated and surrounded by smaller villages and farmsteads. Major centers apparently were spaced about 100 miles apart; hypothesized centers in the project region were located at Town Creek (North Carolina), near Camden, Lake Marion, and Charleston (South Carolina), and near Augusta and Savannah (Georgia) (Ferguson 1971). Anderson (1989) and DePratter (1989) have identified large political centers on the Wateree River (near Camden), on the Oconee River (in central Georgia), and at Savannah (Georgia). These centers usually contained one or more large mounds upon which temples were built. It should be noted that the ceremonial center at the original Charles Towne settlement on Albemarle Point (38CH1) contained no mound structure (South 1970). Mississippian society appears to have been highly stratified, with hereditary ruling families, middle and poorer classes, and slaves (usually prisoners taken in war from other groups).

Protohistoric Period. The Protohistoric period begins in South Carolina with the first Spanish explorations into the region in the 1520s. Native American groups encountered by the European explorers and settlers probably were living in a manner quite similar to the late prehistoric Mississippian groups identified in archaeological sites throughout the Southeast. Indeed, the highly structured Indian society of Cofitachequi, formerly located in central South Carolina and visited by De Soto in 1540, represents an excellent example of the Mississippian social organizations present throughout southeastern North America during the late prehistoric period (Anderson 1985). However, the initial European forays into the Southeast contributed to the disintegration and collapse of the aboriginal Mississippian social structures; disease, warfare, and European slave raids all contributed to the rapid decline of the regional Native populations during the sixteenth century (Dobyns 1983; Ramenofsky 1982; Smith 1984). By the late seventeenth century, Native groups in coastal South Carolina apparently lived in small politically and socially autonomous semi-sedentary groups (Waddell 1980). By the middle eighteenth century, very few Natives remained in the region; all had been displaced or annihilated by the ever-expanding English colonial settlement of the Carolinas (Bull 1770, cited in Anderson and Logan 1981:24-25).

The ethnohistoric record from coastal South Carolina suggests that the Protohistoric groups of the region followed a seasonal pattern which included summer aggregation in villages for planting and harvesting crops, and dispersal into one to three family settlements for the remainder of the year (Rogel 1570 [in Waddell 1980:147-151]). This coastal Protohistoric adaptation is apparently very similar to the Guale pattern of the Georgia coast, as reconstructed by Crook (1986:18). Specific accounts of the Protohistoric groups of the region, the Sewee and the Santee, have been summarized

by Waddell (1980). It appears that both groups included horticultural production within their seasonal round, but did not have permanent, year round villages. Trinkley (1981) suggests that a late variety of Pee Dee ceramics was produced by Sewee groups in the region; his late variety may correspond to the Ashley ware initially described by South (1973; see also Anderson et al. 1982).

Waddell (1980) identified 19 distinct groups between the mouth of the Santee River and the mouth of the Savannah River in the middle of the sixteenth century. Anderson and Logan (1981:29) suggest that many of these groups probably were controlled by Cofitachequi, the dominant Mississippian center/polity in South Carolina, prior to its collapse. By the seventeenth century, all were independently organized. These groups included the Coosaw, Kiawah, Etiwan, and Seewee "tribes" near the Charleston peninsula. The Coosaw inhabited the area to the north and west along the Ashley River. The Kiawah were apparently residing at Albemarle Point and along the lower reaches of the Ashley River in 1670, but gave their settlement to the English colonists and moved to Kiawah Island; in the early eighteenth century they moved south of Combahee River (Swanton 1952:96). The Etiwans were mainly settled on or near Daniel Island to the northeast of Charleston, but their range extended to the head of the Cooper River. The territory of the Seewee met the territory of the Etiwan high up the Cooper, and extended to the north as far as the Santee River (Orvin 1973:14). Moll's map of Carolina, prepared in 1715, shows the Sampa Indians between the Cooper and Wando Rivers, and the Wando Indians and Sewel [sic] Indian Fort east of the Wando River (Figure 2).

Historic Overview of Mt. Pleasant and the Wando Neck Area

Introduction. What is now the Town of Mt. Pleasant began in the mid eighteenth century as a handful of plantations hugging the periphery of the Wando Neck. These settlements extended from Charleston harbor to the edges of the Wando River and its many tributaries. A small network of roads connected these plantations, which included some of Charleston's wealthiest families: the Lynches, Legares, Horlbecks, Lucases, Scotts, and others. These plantations were largely self-sufficient, and their owners looked to Charleston as their metropolitan base. The "Old Village" of Mt. Pleasant, the area along the harbor facing Charleston between Shem Creek and Sullivan's Island, did not emerge as a self-contained village until the 1820s and 1830s, when it was formed from two adjoining plantations; it continued to grow by adopting adjacent plantations into the 1870s.

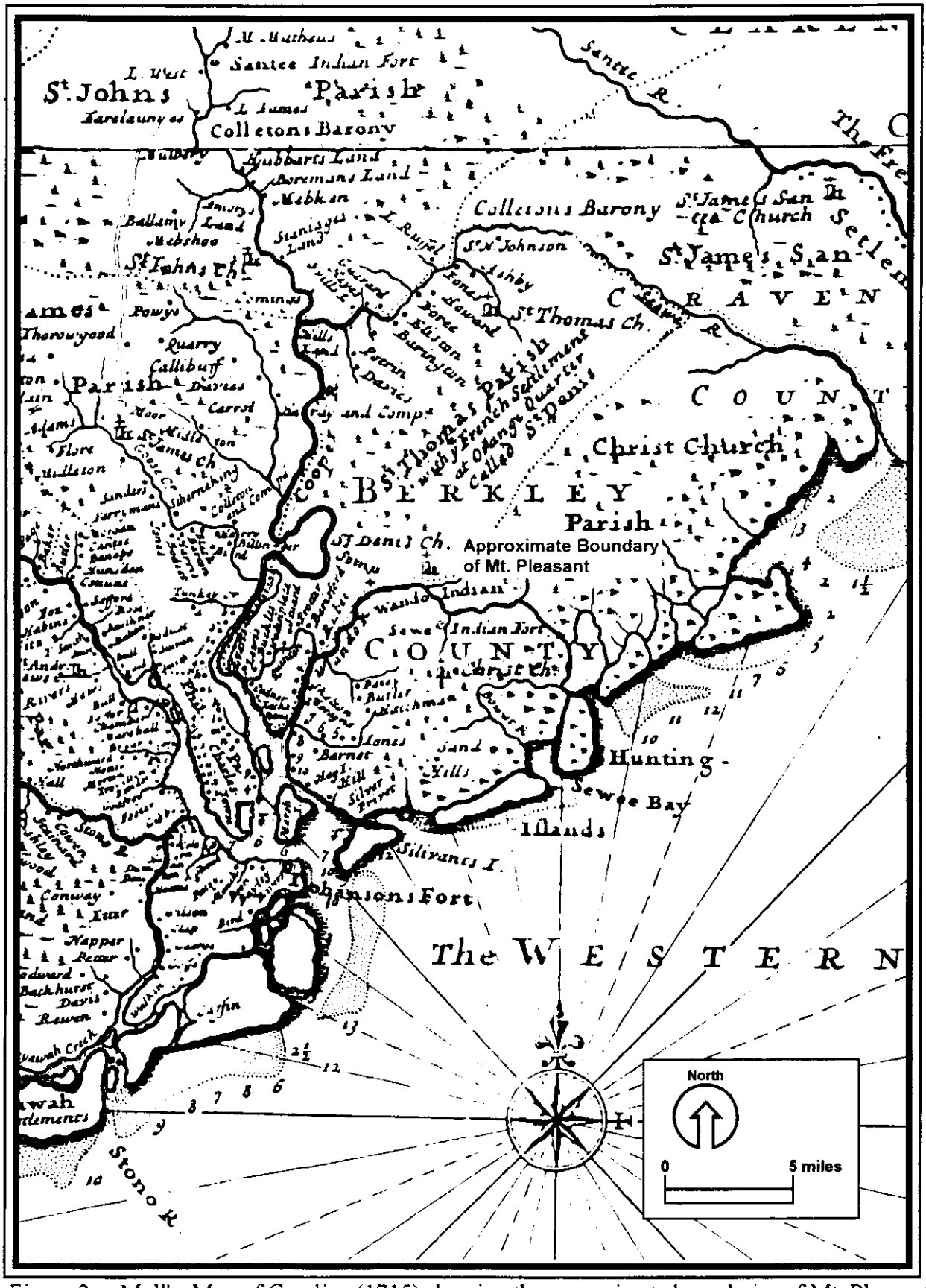


Figure 2. Moll' s Map of Carolina (1715) showing the approximate boundaries of Mt. Pleasant.

In the early and mid nineteenth century, Mt. Pleasant was a small village in Christ Church Parish, serving the residents of Charleston as a resort area connected by ferry, and the residents of the outlying plantations as a residential hub connected by small roads. It was also a manufacturing area, with mills of various kinds throughout the nineteenth century. The town became the county seat of Berkeley County in the 1870s, and then was returned to Charleston County in the 1880s. The Town of Mt. Pleasant has grown steadily through the mid twentieth century, and with increasing speed in the late twentieth century. It now encompasses the original Old Village as well as vast areas that once were outlying plantations tied by family and commerce to both Charleston and Mt. Pleasant, and includes much of what can reasonably be called the Wando Neck. The following overview provides a brief synopsis of the early history of the Carolina colony, the Town of Mt. Pleasant's historical development, and the context for cultural resources in the current town.

Early Explorations. Spanish exploration on the South Carolina coast began as early as 1514, and a landing party went ashore in the Port Royal vicinity (now Beaufort County) in 1520 at a spot they named Santa Elena (Hoffman 1983:64; Rowland 1985:1). From that time on, the Port Royal area was of great interest to both the Spanish and the French. This was not a permanent settlement, however. The first Spanish attempt at a permanent settlement on the South Carolina coast, in 1526, was San Miguel de Gualdape. It appears to have been in the Winyah Bay area, near Georgetown (Quattlebaum 1965). The French, under Jean Ribault, also attempted to establish a settlement on the South Carolina coast in 1562. This settlement, on Parris Island, was called Charlesfort, and also was unsuccessful.

French presence on the South Carolina coast drew the Spanish back, to protect their original interest. Spanish forces attacked Charlesfort and established their own settlement of Santa Elena in 1566. Recent archaeological evidence indicates that the Spanish built their new settlement of Santa Elena on top of the destroyed French settlement (DePratter et al. 1997). Local Indians, the Cusabo, were less than friendly, but despite numerous attacks and several burnings, the Spanish settlers did not abandon Santa Elena until 1587 (Lyon 1984; Rowland 1978:25-57). The Spanish maintained their interest in Santa Elena as part of a series of missions on the sea islands from St. Augustine, Florida, through Georgia, and into South Carolina; Spanish friars were at "St. Ellens" when William Hilton visited the area in 1663 (Covington 1978:8-9; Hilton 1664). During its twenty year existence, Santa Elena served as the base for the first serious explorations into the interior of the state.

English Colonial Occupation. Settlers in the Carolina Lowcountry were caught up in and integral parts of wide-ranging disputes and rivalries among the English, Spanish, Indians, and

African slaves. These disputes and rivalries encompassed nearly all of the Lowcountry, an area that spanned hundreds of miles from Georgetown, South Carolina, to northern Florida. The Spanish had routed the French in East Florida in 1565, and established a settlement at what is now St. Augustine. This Spanish presence was a continual threat to the English settlers, particularly after the 1670s, when Spain learned of the Charles Towne settlement.

The English were the first Europeans to establish permanent colonies. In 1663, King Charles II made a proprietary grant to a group of powerful English courtiers who had supported his return to the throne in 1660, and who sought to profit from the sale of the new lands. These Lords Proprietors, including Sir John Colleton, Sir William Berkeley, and Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, provided the basic rules of governance for the new colony. They also sought to encourage settlers, many of whom came from the overcrowded island of Barbados in the early years. These Englishmen from Barbados first settled at Albemarle Point on the west bank of the Ashley River in 1670. By 1680, they moved their town down the river to Oyster Point, the present location of Charleston, and called it Charles Towne. These initial settlers, and more who followed them, quickly spread along the central South Carolina coast. By the second decade of the eighteenth century, they had established settlements from the Port Royal Harbor in Beaufort County northward to the Santee River in Georgetown County.

The colony's early settlements grew slowly, and despite its geographic spread, the South Carolina Lowcountry contained only around 5,000 European and African-American inhabitants in 1700. The earliest South Carolina economy centered around naval stores, beef and pork, and trade with the Native American populations. However, by the end of the seventeenth century the colonists had begun to experiment with rice cultivation. The regular flood conditions of the immediate tidal area proved valuable, and production for export increased rapidly. By 1715, Charles Towne exported more than 8,000 barrels of rice annually; this number increased to 40,000 by the 1730s. Residents in the Lowcountry also began in the 1740s to experiment with growing and processing indigo, a blue dye that was very popular in Europe and which became one of South Carolina's principal exports during the eighteenth century. Both indigo and rice were labor-intensive, and laid the basis for South Carolina's dependence on African slave labor, much as tobacco had done in the Virginia colony (Coclanis 1989; Wood 1975).

One of the important commercial ventures in the early settlements of the Lowcountry was the raising of cattle. The climate in South Carolina allowed for year-round grazing, and the many necks of land surrounded by rivers and creeks along the coast provided naturally bounded cowpens

and allowed the cattle to range freely. Cattle ranching was also a low-capital industry, with a natural market in the West Indies sugar plantations. Cattle ranching in South Carolina began in the late seventeenth century in the Charleston area, and by the early eighteenth century it had extended into what is now Colleton County, between the Edisto and Combahee rivers (Rowland et al. 1996: 85-88).

While cattle ranching was an ideal frontier industry, it required great amounts of open land. Large purchases of land throughout the Lowcountry created problems between the white settlers and the Yamasee Indians, whose lands were steadily and rapidly encroached upon. Angered by mistreatment from traders and encroachments on their land, the Indians attacked in the Yamasee War in 1715 but did not succeed in dislodging the English (Covington 1978: 12). While the Yamasee staged a number of successful raids through the 1720s, by 1728 the English had routed them and made the area more accessible for renewed English settlement.

With the rapidly increasing wealth in the South Carolina Lowcounty, and with the Yamasee War largely behind them, the population began to swell. By 1730 the colony had 30,000 residents, at least half of whom were black slaves. A 1755 magazine, cited by Peter Wood, estimates that South Carolina residents had imported over 32,000 slaves by 1723 (Wood 1975:151). The growing population increased pressure for territorial expansion, which was compounded by the growing black majority in the Lowcountry. Fears of a slave rebellion, along with fears of attack from the Native Americans such as the Yamasee in 1715, led Charles Towne residents to encourage settlement in the backcountry.

The capacity of the Lords Proprietors to govern the colony effectively declined in the early years of the eighteenth century. Governance under the Lords Proprietors became increasingly arbitrary, while wars with the Natives arose and the colonial currency went into steep depreciation. According to one recent historian of colonial South Carolina, "proprietary attitudes and behavior...convinced many of the dissenters—who at one time had composed the most loyal faction—that the crown was a more reliable source of protection against arbitrary rule" (Weir 1983:94). South Carolina's legislature sent a petition to Parliament in 1719, requesting that royal rule supplant that of the Lords Proprietors. After several years in limbo, South Carolinians received a degree of certainty in 1729 when the crown purchased the Proprietors' interests, and in 1730 when the new royal governor, Robert Johnson, arrived in the colony.